



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Lisa H. Kornberg
Director

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

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**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF THE
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

Dear Governor O'Malley, President Miller and Speaker Busch,

On behalf of the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, I am pleased to present our sixth annual report, which highlights our activities and progress for the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. This report reflects a change of reporting period for our office, as we are now collecting and reporting information based on the fiscal year. Therefore, this report includes a review of the last six months of calendar year 2007 (which was included in last year's report) along with new data from January through June of 2008. Following this transition year, the report will annually reflect the activities and outcomes of each fiscal year.

In April 2008, I was appointed by Governor O'Malley as the new Director to the Office, following a six month position vacancy. My appointment provided the Office the opportunity to reevaluate its priorities and the momentum to access its potential in creating awareness and accessibility for Marylanders who are deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing. Since my tenure began I have spent numerous hours meeting with leaders and constituents in the deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing community to develop an understanding and appreciation of the priorities now facing these communities. In addition, equal time has been allocated to meeting with the leaders of our State agencies to insure that our office remains available to provide support, information, and technical assistance. We continue to partner with State and local agencies to ensure appropriate delivery of State, local and other public services to our constituent population. These meetings, in conjunction with the management of three of our programs, Awareness Training and Technical Assistance, Constituent Services, and Community Outreach and Education, serve to increase the Office's visibility and relevance in providing support to all Marylanders.

The Office continues to be staffed with a Director and an Assistant Director, as well as two part time contractual staff positions. Despite limited staffing, we were able to provide 28 trainings, attend 36 council and task force meetings, disseminate over 250 announcements to the community and represent the Governor by exhibiting at 20 outreach events throughout the fiscal year. We did this in addition to responding to 445 individual constituent requests and continuing production and publication of the ODHH Monthly Bulletin. Through these efforts, we further solidified our role as a representative of the Governor to Maryland's deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing residents.

This year, ODHH continued to expand its commitment to advocacy and community involvement. The feedback from the community has been overwhelmingly positive. We would like to thank Governor O'Malley and his staff, whose support and belief in One Maryland has made our work possible. We look forward continued pursuit of our vision that "all Maryland citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind will have equal and full access to resources, services and opportunities to participate in all aspects of community life."

Sincerely,

Lisa H. Kornberg
Director

About the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Our Mission:

ODHH represents the Governor and his goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders –by providing expertise that enhances the general welfare of Maryland’s deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind residents.

Our Vision:

All Maryland citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind will have equal and full access to resources, services and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life.

What we do:

ODHH was established to:

- ➔ Promote the general welfare of deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing individuals in Maryland;
- ➔ Serve as a coordinating agency that reports directly to the Governor’s Office;
- ➔ Work with various state and private agencies to ensure appropriate delivery of services to all of Maryland’s diverse citizens;
- ➔ Support the development of public policies, regulations and programs that will benefit the community;
- ➔ Improve communication access to existing services and programs;
- ➔ Advise State government and the General Assembly on the needs of deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing individuals; and
- ➔ Coordinate with other units of the State and the federal governments about the services provided to deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing Marylanders.

Who we serve:

ODHH has a two part mission – to provide advocacy, referral and information services to deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing Marylanders and to provide expertise to state and local government agencies.



2008 Staff of ODHH

Lisa H. Kornberg, *Director*
(April 6, 2008 – present)

Denise Gagnon Perdue, *Assistant Director;*
Interim Director (January 1, 2008 – April 6, 2008)

Julie Anne Schafer, *Communications and Special Projects Coordinator*

Laura Quinn, *Administrative Assistant*



Governor Martin O'Malley appoints Lisa H. Kornberg
Director of ODHH

Awareness Training And Technical Assistance

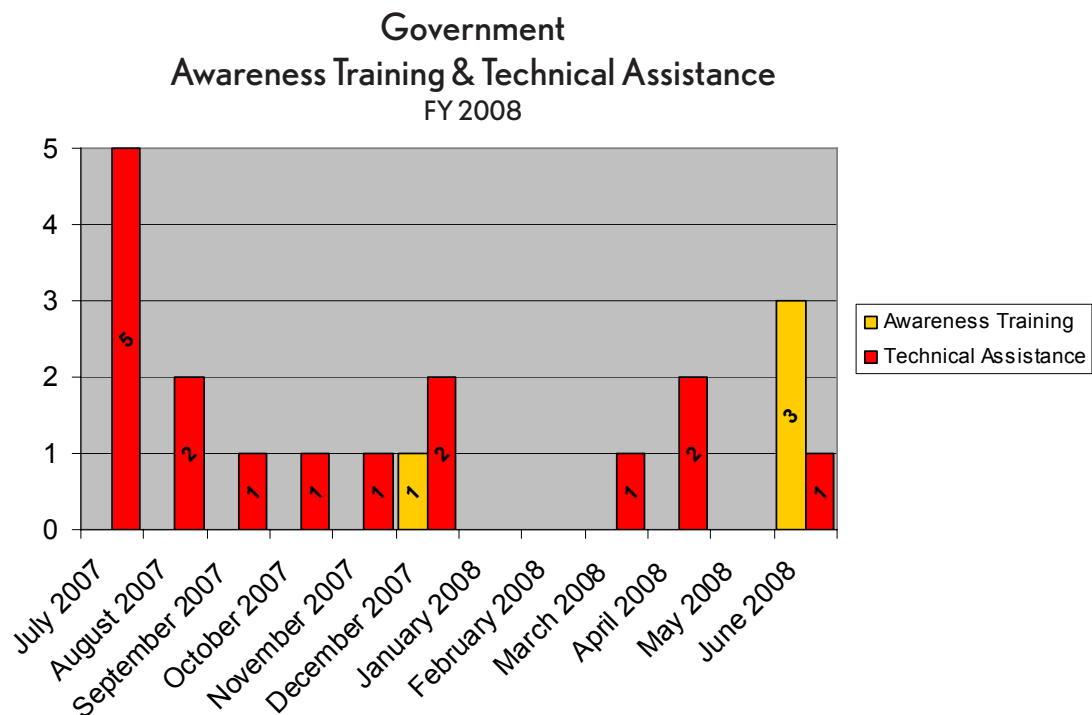
Through presentations and trainings on a variety of topics, including ADA compliance, assistive and adaptive technologies and sensitivity and awareness about communication access, ODHH strives to enhance the welfare of Marylanders with hearing loss. It is through the ongoing provision of information, training and technical assistance that ODHH is able to increase the awareness and sensitivity of both public and private entities about the accessibility needs of the Marylanders we serve.

In FY08, ODHH staff prepared and presented six (6) trainings to state and local government agencies. The presentations topics included ADA compliance, sensitivity and awareness and assistive technology.

Earlier this spring, ODHH staff took a serious look at its training and technical assistance priorities and determined that more focus should be given to government entities and employees. In consultation with leaders from the deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing communities, we developed a marketing strategy for an intensive sensitivity and awareness training program for state and local governments that will be rolled out in FY09.

Training Highlights for 2008:

- Presented a Sensitivity and Awareness Training as part of the Maryland Transportation Authority's Annual Diversity Conference.

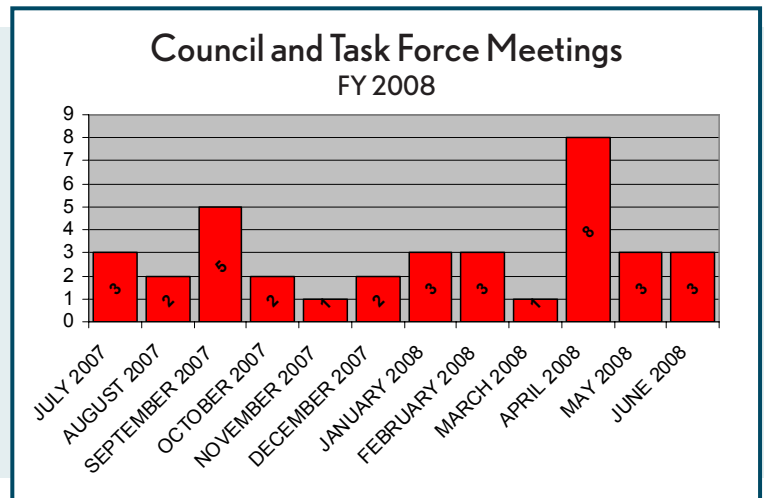


A legislative mandate, technical assistance is primarily provided to governmental agencies when either the governmental agency or ODHH is made aware of an actual or potential communication access issue. For example ODHH has reviewed websites, survey instruments, audio visual material and print media for various agencies in order to provide recommendations and remedies for accessibility issues when necessary.

As a Coordinating Office of the Governor it is incumbent upon the Office to be relevant to state agencies and provide ongoing involvement, consultation and review of state programs since those programs and services change over time. Technical assistance is also provided to non-governmental entities. As such, ODHH staff attends many task force,

committee and council meetings to provide counsel when necessary. Under this prong of the program ODHH, provides technical assistance to:

- The Governor’s Office
- Secretary of State
- Maryland Department of Disabilities
- Baltimore County Government
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH)- Transformation Working Group
- DHMH, Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
- Towson University and National Public Radio
- Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)
- MSDE, Division of Rehabilitation Services



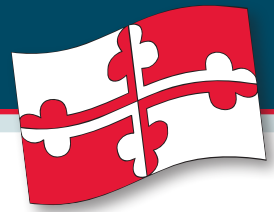
Much of the technical assistance ODHH provides goes undetected by citizenry. Earlier this year ODHH staff met with Executive Staff to discuss the addition of text content to audio material on the Governor’s website. The result of that meeting not only demonstrates how technical assistance is played out it also has been highly praised by deaf and hard of hearing constituents. Governor O’Malley’s 2008 State of the State address can be viewed online with audio, ASL interpretation and printed transcript at <http://www.gov.state.me.us/speeches/080123.html>. In addition, Governor O’Malley’s remaining speeches are also posted with accompanying transcripts.

Technical Assistance Highlights for 2008:

- Collaborated with Maryland Department of Disabilities to provide expertise on communication access issues of deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing “victims” in the Statewide Pandemic Influenza Exercise June 17-19.
- Served in an advisory capacity to the Secretary of State’s Office to increase the number of registered voters with disabilities.
- Sent a letter to all Maryland museums with information on how to make their programs and exhibits more accessible to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.
- Established an ongoing relationship with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene through the Mental Health Subcommittee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People to draft a statewide mental health plan for Marylanders with hearing loss.
- Accepted an invitation from the Maryland Department of Education to join Team Maryland in its efforts to respond to national efforts to reform deaf education by developing a State Plan for Deaf Education.
- Pulled together a stakeholder team to participate in the Maryland Department of Disabilities February 6, 2008 Disaster Readiness Summit for Emergency Managers to develop training and outreach materials that will better enable individuals with disabilities to develop a readiness plan for a disaster or emergency.



Denise Perdue and Julie Anne Schafer model “Grab and Go” Emergency Preparedness Kits

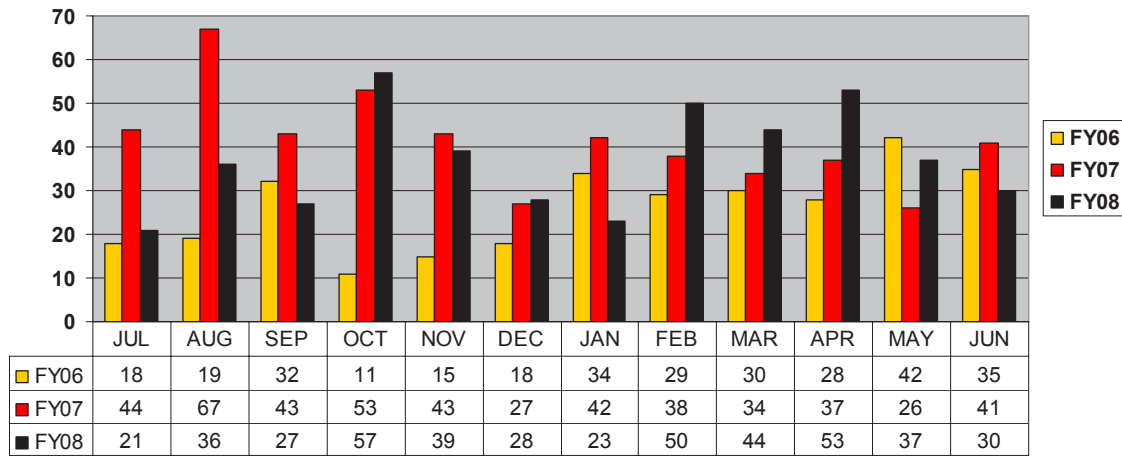


Under the current Administration, ODHH has made dramatic statewide strategic changes that positively impact the lives of deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing Marylanders. Consistent with our mission and vision, the Constituent Services Program directly impacts the community as they seek equal and full access to information, services and programs. The Office serves as a clearinghouse for information and referral to all levels of government, private entities and to the community itself. Requests for information vary from where to locate ASL interpreting services to who are qualified providers of mental health services for deaf people to the availability of “deaf-friendly” nursing homes. While much of this information is posted on ODHH’s website, many of the requests for information do not easily fall into an area that can be categorized or given a stock answer. It is ODHH’s goal to provide a timely response, meaning fewer than 24 business hours, to requests for information. With increased recognition of the Office’s expertise comes an increase in demand for these resources. As a result, we revised the goal to respond to requests for information in five business days or less beginning in FY09.

Marketing our office as a community resource is a continual process. One initiative undertaken this year was the Library Outreach Project. We mailed a package of ODHH brochures to every branch library in Maryland with a request to have them displayed with community resource information. The Library Outreach Project was a success. Not only have constituents contacted our office as a result of finding our brochure at their library, several librarians have contacted our office seeking information for themselves or on behalf of patrons.

Constituent Services

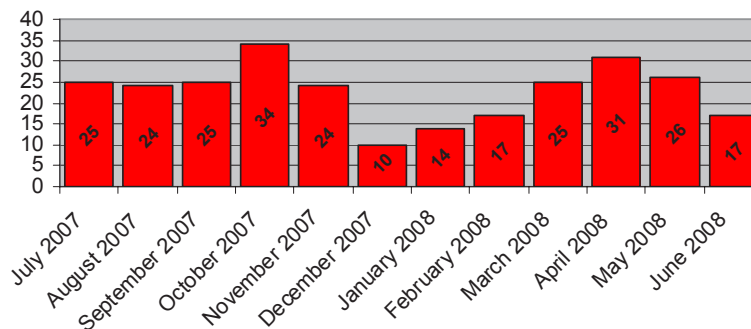
Request for Information
Month by Month Comparison
Fiscal Year 2006-2008



Community Service Announcements

ODHH circulates pertinent community announcements to several electronic distribution lists as a community service. In FY08 ODHH sent out 283 Community Service Announcements reflected in the following table:

Announcements FY 2008



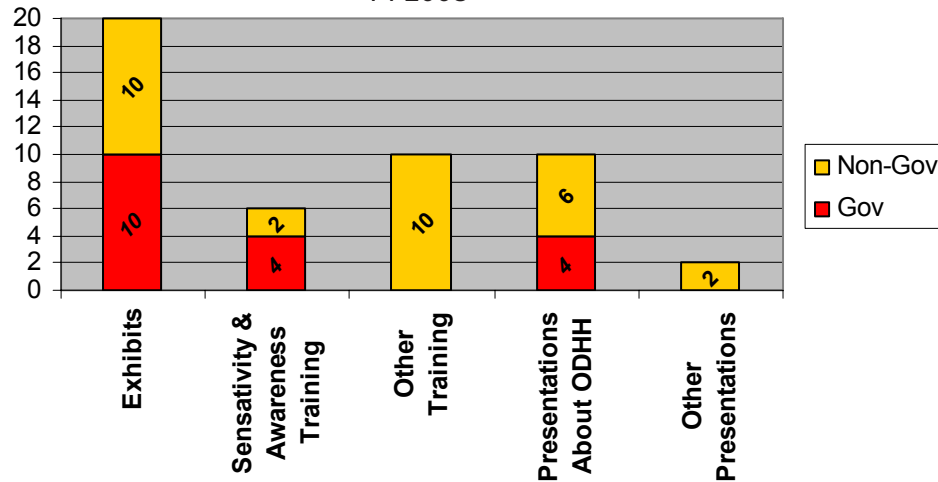
Community Outreach And Education

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is the state resource on issues affecting deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing individuals. The Community Outreach and Education program continues to support our mission by educating the community about their rights, how to access programs and services and where to locate such services if they are available. We presented twenty-two (22) workshops or educational seminars to non-governmental entities this fiscal year.

Community Outreach and Education

Annual Outreach Statistics

FY 2008



Exhibits at expos, fairs and conferences, as well as presentations and trainings to community groups and organizations, are a few of the ways ODHH connects with its constituents. ODHH exhibited at 20 venues during FY08. Another prominent feature of this program is the ODHH Monthly Bulletin, a newsletter that provides stakeholder groups with pertinent information that affects the community. Introduced just 13 months ago, the ODHH Monthly Bulletin has become a vital tool for the Office to achieve its mission in all three areas of programming. The ODHH Monthly Bulletin is published and distributed electronically. Back issues are posted on ODHH's website.

Community Outreach Highlights:

- 2008 was a Presidential election year. The Office focused a great deal of resources on accessible voter registration drives and organizing voting machine demonstrations to highlight accessibility features. All ODHH staff received training to become voter registration volunteers. While this activity aimed to increase awareness in the community, it also satisfied goals set for our Technical Assistance program by assisting in statewide efforts to increase the number of registered voters with disabilities, a directive of the Secretary of State's office.



The Deaf Shalom Zone was the 2008 recipient of the Governor's 25th Anniversary Volunteerism Award

- The Deaf Shalom Zone, a faith-based network of more than 250 deaf and hearing people who provides countless hours of service and support to deaf and hard of hearing people in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties, was one of 40 recipients of the Governor's Volunteer Service Award. ODHH nominated the Shalom Zone because of its commitment to the community and to bring well-deserved attention to a volunteer group providing services to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind in Maryland.

Legislative Action Alerts were initiated at the beginning of this year's General Assembly session as a way to electronically distribute information about proposed legislation that might have an impact on issues facing deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing people. The Legislative Action Alerts is a positive way to improve the community's access to legislative initiatives in a timely manner.

Community Education Highlights:

- Supported the Deaf Independent Living Association's (DILA) successful grant application to continue providing a series of workshops for healthcare providers about their responsibilities under Title III of the ADA. A second focus of the grant is to provide training to deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing consumers on how to advocate for effective communication in health care settings. In collaboration with the Maryland Association of the Deaf (MDAD) ODHH staff presented two workshops during the fiscal year to providers and consumers in Chestertown on the Eastern Shore. The remaining six workshops will be conducted in FY09 and will also take place on the Eastern Shore.
- Developed and presented a series of graduate-level seminars on Assistive Technology for deaf and hard of hearing students for Frostburg State University's Summer Institute for Special Educators.

Town Hall Meetings

The enabling legislation for the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) requires that the office host "at least two public town hall meetings each year to receive public comments on the quality of state services and programs affecting deaf and hard of hearing individuals; ODHH-related functions and operations; and any other issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing individuals." There were two meetings hosted by the Office during FY 2008.

- The first, held on November 14, 2007 was located at the Montgomery County Executive Office Building where approximately 25 community representatives provided input to the ODHH staff and Advisory Council.
- The second meeting was held on June 24, 2008 at the Anne Arundel County Public Library in Odenton, Maryland. Here again, approximately 25 representatives from the community shared their interest, opinions and needs with the staff and advisory council representatives.

In addition to the mandated Town Hall meetings, ODHH Staff and/or members of the Advisory Council attended a number of meetings throughout the State to solicit input and feedback on the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing communities. This information is used to develop strategies that will further the Office's mission and vision. Examples of meetings attended include:

- Community Leadership Meeting
- Brown Bag Lunches
- MDOD Stakeholder meetings
- DORS community input meetings
- Inner Harbor Deaf Center and Community Centers
- Community Advocacy and Association Meetings (HLAA, MDAD, MDSC)
- State Steering Committee Meetings

The Office values the input of the community and makes its best effort to address the concerns raised by stakeholders at the Town Hall Meetings we host. During the FY 07, some concerns raised by the participants were the quality of interpreters in public schools, interpreting services in hospitals, and captioning of informational videos in places of public accommodation. Participants also expressed wanting to know demographics and statistics for the number of deaf and hard of hearing people in Maryland and the need for frequent updates on ODHH's activities at the State level.

In response to these concerns, ODHH initiated contact with acute care hospitals to provide sensitivity and awareness training about communication access issues. We also initiated contact with museums around Maryland to promote accessible exhibitions and programs. The office now has the demographics of deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders posted on its website. And in response to providing frequent updates about ODHH's activities at the State level, we produce and publish the ODHH Monthly Bulletin.



The Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was established in October 2001. The Council consists of 16 members – 8 members represent state agencies and 8 members represent the general public. The Advisory Council is responsible to:

1. advise ODHH in carrying out its duties;
2. review statewide activities for deaf and hard of hearing individuals;
3. foster the coordination of and support for programs for the deaf and hard of hearing; and
4. study the ways to maximize the use of facilities and services available to deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

The Council was effected by the challenges of transition during this past fiscal year. At the same time the Office was looking to hire a new Director, there were a number of appointees on the Council whose term had expired, but replacements had yet to be identified. One of the first responsibilities of the new Director was to review the membership of the Council and coordinate with the Governor's Office and the Appointments Office to ensure that all of the positions would be filled in a timely manner. During the last quarter of FY2008, three new members were appointed to the Council including:

Carl Baily representing the Maryland Department of Human Resources
Gary Monroe representing the Maryland Commission on Human Relations, and
John J. Rouse representing the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

Although the membership was in transition, the Council remained active. Quarterly meetings were held and a quorum was present at each. These meetings, which were held across the State to insure geographic diversity and representation, continued to provide Council members with information on the activities of the Office, updates from the sub-committees and information and presentations from state and public entities to ensure that the Council members remained current on key issues. Examples of presentations to the Council included:

- Joint Commission Report for Universal Newborn Hearing Screening;
- TAM Office Demonstration: Telecommunications Technology for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People;
- MDOT updates on the LED systems on Trains; and
- Proposed Federal Guidelines for Accessible Technology.

The Advisory Council also maintained its role in overseeing the activities and projects of the Office. Ongoing reports were provided on a number of projects including:

- Reviewing the results of Town Hall meetings;
- Updates on sub-committee reports;
- Follow up on the library outreach project (distributing information about ODHH to all public libraries) and the museum access project (ensuring that text copies of audio information is available to patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing);
- Updates on MDOD stakeholder input;
- Review of the Office's input at the DORS public input meetings; and
- Ongoing review of ODHH programs and services including Technical Assistance, Consulting Services, Training and Outreach.

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